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CHRISTIANITY IN GERMANY

By Ernst Wilhelm Meyer

Catholic and Protestant church leaders of Western Germany, apparently in tacit agreement, recently issued public appeals sharply critical of certain Allied policies in Germany which they regard as incompatible with Christian principles, especially the expulsion of millions of Eastern Germans from their homes and the use of war prisoners as slave labor.

The attempted suppression by American occupation authorities of the Pastoral Letter of the Catholic hierarchy has at last focused world attention on a very basic issue of our time -- the survival of Christianity in Germany.

Of particular importance is the survival of Protestant Christianity, because its center on the European Continent always has been Germany. About 40,000,000 people in that country consider themselves Protestants and are influenced by Protestant thought even when they are only nominal Christians. In the other continental countries there are only about 25,000,000 Protestants altogether. Therefore, a Protestant eclipse in Germany would mean an enormous weakening of World Protestantism.

The situation is grave also with regard to Catholicism which, in Germany, counts about 30,000,000 adherents. But because of the Catholic character of other European countries an eclipse of German Catholicism would not necessarily be fatal to World Catholicism. Nevertheless, the Vatican has not concealed its apprehensions.

Since National Socialism and Christianity are incompatible, the mere fact that the Nazis could come to predominate was a grim portent for the latter. The resistance record of German Protestantism and Catholicism, therefore, demands all the more attention.

II

The specifically Christian share in the German opposition movement was unsurpassed by that of any other participating group. It is not sufficiently known that throughout the war no prayers for victory were said in German churches. Almost all of the 2,000

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young Lutheran candidates in theology refused to swear the oath of allegiance to Hitler. In the Barmen Declaration, of 1934, Protestant leadership rejected "the false doctrine that there are realms of life in which we belong not to Jesus Christ but to other masters". Consequently, the churches stood firm against that eternal grave-digger of Christianity, anti-Semitism, publicly condemned in the Evangelical Church Letter of 1936.

The "Confessional Church" which, under the leadership of Rev. Martin Niemöller and Bishop Theophil Wurm of Württemberg, bravely resisted all inroads of Nazism, was severely persecuted by Hitler. In 1937 alone, 800 of its ministers were arrested; others were deprived of their salaries. Church periodicals were suppressed, and seminaries closed.

Uncompromising Catholic opposition was inspiringly expressed in the Pastoral Letters of 1938 and 1943. Among the martyrs under Hitlerism, Catholic priests and monks were outstanding. In the Dachau concentration camp alone the American troops found imprisoned about 300 members of the German Catholic clergy.

It was, therefore, no surprise when recently three German bishops were made Cardinals by the Pope, and when, in an impressive manifestation of the ecumenical movement, Protestant leaders from America, France, Great Britain, Holland and Switzerland welcomed the German Evangelical Church back into the World Council of Churches.

German Catholicism and Protestantism under the Swastika had demonstrated the inner unity of Christianity. The Berlin Catholic Church Gazette had called it a "brotherhood in arms". This Christian fellowship is now being strengthened by the disaster which has overtaken the German nation as a whole. "There has been developed an understanding better than ever before between Catholic and Protestant leaders", said the Catholic Bishop Hilfrich, of Limburg, two weeks ago.

III

Under Nazi rule there were of course many Christians who did not stand the test. But the core of Christianity has become stronger, not weaker, during those years. Is optimism justified?

Those who say that German youth has been thoroughly indoctrinated with Hitlerism or that most Germans exist in a spiritual vacuum, overlook the fact that Hitlerism had a

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predominant influence over the youth only from 1933 to 1939. "In recent years, the majority of educated youth has been out of sympathy with Nazi philosophy", said Dr. E. Müller, Secretary of the German Christian Student Movement. Many young Germans under Hitler's rule became cynics and disbelievers rather than Nazis. But wherever a spiritual vacuum exists, the Church is in a particularly favorable position to fill it.

Man, however, is influenced by many factors other than religion. Economic and political interests, both domestic and foreign, likewise mold his thinking. So long as international statesmanship operates within these spheres in flagrant disregard of Christian principles, the obstacles to a new growth of Christian influence in Germany must appear very great. As far back as February 25, the delegates to the Provisional Committee of the World Council of Churches warned: "To seek vengeance against former enemies by depriving them of the necessities of life, or by mass expulsion of their populations, or in any other manner, can only bring fresh disaster."

The collective-guilt propaganda, inside and outside Germany, further complicates the situation. Many Germans are morally not guilty of Hitlerism. The idea of a collective moral guilt is pagan. If upheld, it must deprive us of some of the highest achievements of our Christian heritage. Political responsibility extends further; but those who vigorously opposed Hitlerism can hardly be called politically guilty. Only the legal responsibility rests on the entire German nation.

One thing remains certain: If Christian leaders in Germany should be induced to overstress the undeniably enormous German guilt, their influence in shaping the German mind will be handicapped. One should not tax too heavily the understanding of "the common man", lest he be drawn not to Christianity and Democracy, but toward very different realms. The ancient Jewish prophets never humiliated Israel when calling to repentance.

IV

Some developments abroad are encouraging to German Christianity. For example, the traditionally supranational attitude of the Vatican serves to strengthen Christianity everywhere.

The Protestant ecumenical movement, which receives its strongest impulses from America,

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grows steadily in importance. Throughout the war, its headquarters in Geneva under the Dutchman Dr. W. A. Visser t'Hooft, remained, with the Vatican, the only international center where Germans were admitted to coöperation. Besides, the World Student Christian Movement has grown in influence and effectiveness. Nor should the significance of Christian Democratic political movements in European countries be underrated.

Yet, the odds against which German Christianity has to struggle are almost overwhelming. The Protestant Bishop Theophil Wurm, one of the most uncompromising foes of Hitlerism, anticipated the latest Pastoral Letter of the Catholic hierarchy when he reminded us, some months ago, that the Christian Churches when safeguarding Christian standards cannot bow before any government, Allied military governments not excepted. This statement was in agreement not only with the basic tenets of American Protestantism, but also with the apirit and letter of the Manifesto of the Oxford Conference of World Protestantism, held in 1937.

What is needed today is not criticism and suspicion directed against Christianity in Germany, but encouragement and support by the church leaders and laymen of Allied and neutral countries.

The issue at stake is not German Protestantism or Catholicism, but supranational, ecumenical Christianity. The issue is Western Civilization resting on the two pillars of Hellenic self-restraint and Christian love. In the interest of this most common cause German Christianity will have to receive support not merely in words, but in deeds; not only in deeds of charity, but in the field of politics and economics as well. Otherwise, despite its recent rejuvenation, German Christianity will not be able to fulfill its heavy tasks, and the loss will be universal. Fortunately, some appreciation of this danger is now apparent.

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Dr. Ernst Wilhelm Meyer, a native of German Silesia, was until 1937 Counselor of Legation at the German Embassy in Washington. He resigned in protest against Nazi policies. Dr. Meyer has lectured widely under the auspices of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ. He is now Associate Professor of Political Science at Bucknell University, Lewisburg, Pa.

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Not Merely Gossip *A Supplement to* Human Events Vol. III - No. 19

By Frank C. Hanighen May 8, 1946

The tendency to personalize the disastrous coal strike and to blame it all on John L. Lewis has drawn protest from some unquestionably unbiased observers in Washington. They are keenly conscious that there are selfish attempts to exploit hatred against individuals who have, rightly or wrongly, inspired popular antagonism, and they believe that John L. is unjustly accused of placing his personal ambition ahead of the country's interest.

They are familiar, of course, with Lewis' "power complex" of years past. But Lewis is 66, and not as vigorous physically as he was. A long range struggle for power is much less likely today to be the determining factor. John L., they believe, is sincerely waging this fight as a sort of "last battle" for miners' health, welfare and safety measures of protection -- which everyone with any knowledge of mining agrees are necessary. And, as any other labor leader would do, he wishes to win them when the miners have strong bargaining power. A few years hence the miners may not enjoy this strategic position.

Moreover, it is in the national interest that mining, though inevitably dangerous, should not be a repulsive occupation. The British coal industry is now moribund partly because miners' sons refuse to work under the conditions imposed on their fathers. Lewis is trying to insure that a similar outcome is not experienced here.

If there has to be a goat in this national disaster, it is felt that it should be the Truman Administration. All observers of labor disputes know that behind the smoke screen of epithets and hot words between the contestants there usually exists a sincere desire among both parties to get together and settle. They also know that there are various strings that can be pulled, influences brought to bear and tricks of mediation worked -- which methods knowledgeable labor experts traditionally employ. The White House and the Labor Department have failed to utilize these means in any effective way to secure labor peace, in this and other recent strikes.

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Appeasement of Russian imperialism is not dead, nor does it merely sleep. Reliable sources claim that it is actively working in one vitally important arm of the Government -- the Treasury. While it has been assumed that the policy vis-à-vis Soviet Russia had changed in the past two months, and the assumption is true as to the State Department and Mr. Byrnes, it develops that the Treasury Department policy runs on the old, and directly contrary lines. Since that policy involves money, the course followed by the Treasury Department serves to some extent to impair the effect of speeches, utterances, and international combinazioni of the State Department. It is not too much to say that a vigorous feud is already raging between the two arms of the Government.

This clash is strikingly illustrated by the division between the two Departments on the disposition of Germany. State Department generally favors the British line as to the future of the Ruhr and Rhineland, the industrial heart of Germany; that is, State wants these essential areas kept as part of a reconstructed and unified Reich, under international control. The Treasury reportedly wants these areas detached from Germany.

Treasury, say well-informed and interested parties, is doing something concretely to forward its policy. In the current French loan talks, the Treasury has given the French representatives to understand that unless their Government sticks to its official demand that France should have the Ruhr and Rhineland, the Treasury will be disinclined to grant France the loan. M. Blum and the French representatives are naturally not unaffected by this threat.

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Treasury's attitude appears in other matters. The agreement with Poland for a $90,000,000 loan was assertedly made over the opposition of the State Department, after much controversy. In the end, Byrnes made a promise of free elections the quid pro quo for the loan. The Polish puppet Government, by way of keeping its end of the bargain, put off the May elections until fall. Two other proposed loans -- as yet sedulously shielded from the public gaze -- further reveal the Treasury's bias. It has tried to grant a loan to Marshal Tito's Russian puppet, Yugoslavia, but has been blocked by State. At the same time, the Treasury has proved cool to a loan for Turkey which that republic, principal Near East bastion against Russia's southward push, has recently sought. Now, whatever may be said for or against the financial soundness of these loans, there does emerge a political pattern -- and it looks suspiciously like calculated indorsement of Moscow's imperialistic plans.

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Two weeks ago, President Truman had virtually decided to name Robert H. Jackson to the post of Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. Apprised of the President's inclination, prominent members of Congress and other personalities hastened to the White House and strongly advised against the appointment. They told the President that the bitter split among the ranks of the Justices would be widened if Jackson were appointed, since that would strengthen one faction as against another. Next, they emphasized that Jackson's role as Prosecutor at Nuremberg had aroused strong criticism among members not only of the Court but also of the American Bar, and that most of the other Justices feared that Jackson's elevation to the No. 1 position would therefore lower the prestige of the Court. Truman decided to postpone his decision, particularly since he has until July, when Congress, which must pass on the Court appointment, will presumably disperse for the summer. Within the portals of the Court Building, the desire is expressed that the President should name a Republican (Mr. Burton is the only Republican Justice) and the name of Charles E. Hughes, Jr., son of the former Chief Justice, is hopefully mentioned.

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Behind the reverberating Palestine Commission Report lies a story which illuminates some of the backstage politics. Many have expressed surprise that the British members of the Commission opposed the American recommendations -- for instance, for 100,000 Jewish visas to Palestine -- until the last moment, then surprisingly signed the report. The fact is that the British Government had instructed British members not to issue a minority report unless some American members would go along with them. As it happened, no American member did dissent, so the British went along with the Americans. The British intention was to maintain semblance of a solid Anglo-American front.

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It is reliably reported that Governor Alf M. Landon will very soon extend to Senator Robert M. La Follette, Jr., a warm welcome back into the Republican fold. It is not widely known that Governor Landon has for some years been working quietly to patch up the Progressive-G.O.P. split. He has urged Republican leaders to win back to the Party a Senator, one of the ablest in the Upper House, who is the heir of a very potent tradition in American politics. Governor Landon shrewdly perceived that the La Follette name carries much weight, and attracts a large number of followers, not only in Wisconsin, but throughout the country, and not only among farmers in the Middle West, but also in the ranks of Labor. Landon deplored the failure of Chairman Reece to "roll out the carpet" when Senator La Follette recently announced that he would run in the Republican primaries in Wisconsin. The Kansas leader believes that it would do his Party far more good to take the La Follette tradition to its breast than to follow the Willkie-Dewey-Stassen line of "me-tooing" the New Deal. He is convinced that it would be healthy for the Republican Party to have a Left-wing, but a real Left-wing, and not a Democratic Trojan Horse.

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Notes and Quotes

Moscow today discusses the danger of "capitalist encirclement of Russia", while the reverse — communist encirclement of capitalist states — is a topic in the Western world. In this connection, a quotation from Stalin's book Foundations of Leninism (New York, 1932, page 53) seems rather prophetic today: "Of course, in the distant future, if the proletariat will be victorious in the most important capitalist countries and if the present capitalist encirclement will give way to a socialist encirclement, a peaceful course of development will be possible for some of the capitalist countries whose capitalists, in view of the 'unfavorable' international situation, will consider it advisable 'voluntarily' to make substantial concessions to the proletariat."

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"Marxism is the opium of the intellectuals." Edmund Wilson in his new book, Memoirs of Hecate County.

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Captain B. H. Liddell Hart corrects some misconceptions about German conduct in the war, in Harpers Magazine, March, 1946: "The abominations practiced on conquered peoples by the Germans were essentially a civil as opposed to a military development — executed primarily by forces organized for the role of 'political police'. On the military side, in contrast, the balance of evidence seems to show that the level of behavior was better in a number of respects in the war of 1939-45 than in the war of 1914-18, at any rate in the struggle between Germany and her Western enemies. Here the armies in general observed many of the rules contained in the old code of war, both as between themselves and in dealing with the civil population of areas they overran. In the Western theater, allegations of military atrocities were much fewer in the Second World War than in the first, and so were authenticated cases. This is a significant phenomenon, and the most hopeful one for the future that emerged from the recent war."

Hart, recalling Hitler's proposal of 1935, repeated in 1936, for a universal agreement that bombing should be confined to the fighting zone, and its lack of response in England, says: "During the earlier stages of the war itself, when the Germans had a greatly superior bombing force, it must be recognized that their practice kept close to the conditions of their . . . pre-war proposal. Though the bombings of Warsaw and Rotterdam horrified a world not yet acclimated to such air massacres, these did not take place till the German troops were fighting their way into these cities, and thus conformed to the old rules of siege bombardment, as well as to the 1935-36 definition. The Germans' departure from this code during the war can hardly be dated before September, 1940, when the night bombing of London was launched, following upon six successive attacks on Berlin by the RAF during the previous fortnight. The Germans were thus strictly justified in describing this as a reprisal. Moreover, it must also be admitted that, notwithstanding their overwhelming bombing superiority, they took the initiative a few weeks later in proposing a mutual agreement that would put a limitation on such city bombing; and several times they discontinued their attacks when there was a pause in the much lighter British raids, thereby showing their desire for a truce in the inter-city bombing competition."

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One of our subscribers makes this caustic observation on the Churchill speech at Fulton, Missouri: "It is my feeling that Winnie is the last to have a right to talk anti-Russian since he was the first, even more than F.D.R., to smooth the way of the Russians into Europe. When he offered the Russians an alliance on the very day of the German invasion of Russia, he made a decisive mistake and he under-wrote successively Tehran and Yalta. So, what is he weeping about?"

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accept, but has attached certain conditions, as yet unreported. It is believed that he wishes a free hand in choosing personnel. At any rate, the matter is presumably being discussed by Marshall and Truman during the former's current stay in this country.

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Members of Congress and State Department higher-ups have been disputing as to whether the ousting of pro-Communist members of the State Department should take the form of a noisy exposure or of a quiet purge. Premier Mackenzie King gave President Truman a list of "fifth columnists" in official Washington, of whom a large percentage were State Department functionaries. One Assistant Secretary of State has promised that several score of these individuals will be dismissed from the Department within a few days and has asked Capitol Hill not to raise a row. But Members of Congress replied that they will continue their probe of the matter. Observers here feel that at least a considerable exodus from the State Department, not to mention other sections of the Government, is sure to come.

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The jockeying for position among the Big Three is nowhere better illustrated than in the field of radio propaganda. The British Broadcasting Company has finally decided to penetrate the "iron curtain" by means of short-wave broadcasts in the Russian language, despite Russian opposition. The State Department's Information Division may follow the British lead. Experts estimate that there are at least 75,000 short-wave receiving sets in European Russia, many of which are in schools. But even if only Soviet officials should have access to this form of news, it may have no little effect.

Observers point to the example of Yugoslavia, where the papers at first printed only the initial paragraph of the recent American note granting recognition to Tito's Government. However, after American broadcasts beamed at Yugoslavia had given the full text of the note, including six paragraphs which expressed strong disapproval of Tito's brand of "democracy", thousands of people called at the American Embassy in Belgrade and asked for the full text of the note, which the Yugoslav press finally felt obliged to print in order to retain some hold on the confidence of its readers.

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The State and War Departments are reportedly barring the publication of a report on the catastrophic food, housing and health conditions in Germany, prepared by a seven-man non-partisan, inter-denominational relief committee which toured Germany in January. Two members of the Committee were members of the American Friends Service Committee. The report pictured conditions in Germany in a manner greatly at variance with the optimistic statements of Mrs. Roosevelt, Senator Connally and General Clay. Additionally, it is known that American authorities in Germany have decreed that no deaths of Germans be described as arising from malnutrition.

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Communist propaganda has recently tried to discredit former President Hoover's famine relief efforts by charging that, after the last war, Mr. Hoover had discriminated against Soviet Russia. The falsity of this accusation is shown in H. H. Fisher's book, The Famine in Soviet Russia, 1919-23 (Macmillan, 1927). Fisher describes how unpopular was the idea of feeding Bolshevik Russia and how Mr. Hoover persisted in carrying through the project. As a result of his work, his American Relief Administration collected a total of $61,566,232 in relief funds for Russia and dispatched 718,770 metric tons of supplies to that suffering country.

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A new design for Russian expansion in the Far East has appeared. Reports from China say that the "Eastern Mongolian Independent Republic", sponsored by Russia and headed by a Moscow-trained Mongol officer holding a general's rank in the Red Army, has been founded in the northwestern part of Manchuria; territory pledged to China by the Cairo and Potsdam agreements. This area, one of the richest in timber and raw materials, has been under Russian military occupation since the fall of Japan. It is inhabited by the Barga Mongols. In 1929, the Soviet Union tried to foster an independence movement among these people.

Additionally, the New York Times on February 12 reported that another Mongol independent republic is being formed in Inner Mongolia, also recognized as part of China. Far Eastern experts are wondering if the next step will be an attempt to promote independence among the Mongols in Sinkiang Province, where there have been armed revolts against the Chinese Government.

From these reports emerges a pattern of Mongol states -- including all of the above, plus the Outer Mongolian People's Republic already recognized by China, and the Buriat Mongol Republic which is part of the Soviet Union. Such a belt of states would provide a buffer for Russia along the Siberian border.

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The outcome of events in China may not prove satisfactory to the Democratic League, the third most important political group after Kuomintang and the Communists; but a picture of the League's hopes, as given by a party spokesman is a valuable indication of the way one not entirely negligible force is going to move in coming months. The Democratic League is sincerely and completely "democratic" in organization, methods and objectives; unlike Chiang's Kuomintang which is partly totalitarian, and the Communist Party which is wholly totalitarian. The spokesman says:

"We intend to work for a really democratic China, by degrees. Thus, we intend to break into the Communists' totalitarian area by getting them to agree to allow publication of a Democratic League paper in Yenan, where there is at present only the Communist press. They'll probably oppose establishment of a Kuomintang paper there, but will settle for one of ours. Then we'll get a really unified Army. How? By naming a civilian Minister of War, preferably a Democratic League man, with full power over all the armies. The civilian Minister would then reduce the size of the Army and remove both General Ho Ying Chin, who is Kuomintang, and General Chu Te, who is Communist. There are quite a number of 'liberal' generals who could be placed in command."

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While President Truman is being criticized for his mistakes in the handling of domestic policy, Secretary of State Byrnes is the cause of no little ironic comment about his extraordinary lack of knowledge of geography. On September 19, 1945, we reported how Mr. Byrnes seemed unable to distinguish between the Balkans and the Baltic States. Last week, in the course of his statement supporting trusteeship and eventual independence for various parts of the Italian Empire, Mr. Byrnes was apparently unable to name these former colonies. Only with the help of the newspaper correspondents, who were interviewing him, could the Secretary of State identify them as Italian Somaliland, Eritrea, Libya and Tripolitania. Mr. Byrnes, it is concluded, is perhaps learning, but his education in foreign affairs may prove rather costly to the United States.

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We like the following toast reportedly given at the Moscow Conference: "To the plain people of the Soviet Union, of the United Kingdom, and of the United States of America: whom the war has joined together, let not the peace put asunder."

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NOTES AND QUOTES

The Editors, who also receive letters from sensitive readers, consider that the following quotation from the excellent Economist (January 5) could serve in large part as an apologia for HUMAN EVENTS and "Not Merely Gossip": "A correspondent complains that The Economist has recently been all gloom and pessimism. He is quite right. With the world so clearly seeking new directions for its journey, and with so many wrong turnings being taken every day, it is sometimes difficult to avoid alarm and despondency. The Economist lays no claim to be regarded as escapist literature, and in these early days of peace the prospect is often discouraging. The commentator's duty is to describe things as he sees them, even when they are unpleasant. Cynicism is a fault; but wishful thinking has slain its millions, and a journal of opinion which is afraid of the truth is neglecting its duty.

" . . . Weekly comment on public affairs is necessarily concerned with the more immediate aspects of what is happening in the world. Within the limits of three columns it is impossible to go back to the Creation and adjust each subject, in its proper proportions, to the further horizons. If the present state of the world presents a sorry contrast with the might-have-been and with the might-still-be, space usually forbids a mention of how pleasing is the contrast with the very-nearly-was."

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One of our correspondents, who is as "gloomy" as we are about the results of Russian expansion, writes us to point out that those who criticize Russia should not fall into the error of blaming Russia for all the current ills of the world. We should consider, she says, our own shortcomings, especially the "inability of the victors to tackle the economic, intellectual and moral problems of the 'liberated' world, which would be hardly less difficult if Russia didn't exist. The fact is that the Russians made every mistake in the book politically in Europe, and yet Europe falls into a sort of sub-communist stupor from sheer poverty and undernourishment and lack of leadership. We, the Western democracies, have proved completely unable to manage the victory."

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Not all British Laborites are of the same mind as that Bloomsbury Lenin, Professor Laski. The views of Mr. Maurice Cranston are perhaps more typical of the average Englishman who voted the Attlee Government into power last summer. Mr. Cranston, in Peace News (January 18), says: "There is a lot to be said for Toryism. A lot to be said, that is, for sticking to British constitutional traditions, and to capitalism. Both offer an assurance of personal freedom and tolerance such as no other system affords. Croce, the Italian philosopher, wrote some months ago that liberty and capitalism are inseparable. Perhaps he is right. For in the few countries that have become Social Democratic -- New Zealand, Australia, Sweden and others -- the economic system remains 60 per cent (or more) capitalist. Therefore, I think tolerance and liberty are about the most valuable features of any known political system. I am against 100 per cent Nationalization of British industry."

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Some Swedish legal experts depart widely from Justice Jackson's conceptions, as may be seen from the following transcript of a Stockholm broadcast on February 1: "Four Swedish jurists have published a notable statement in connection with the war liability trials going on in Helsingfors. The statement describes the retroactive character of the Finnish Liability Act as incompatible with the Western sense of justice, and comes to the conclusion that political views do not involve liabilities. Finland's responsibility for the war can only be determined by an international court of arbitration."

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NOTES AND QUOTES

The Swiss Basler Nationalzeitung (January 8) says: "Never before in history have the peoples of continental Europe been so dependent upon one another as today. Unless the gaping void, which is called Germany, is filled, all of us, whether large or small, will have to suffer to a degree much more catastrophic than after the First World War, when the Russian economy ceased to be a factor."

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George Orwell in the London Tribune (December 28, 1945) forecasts world events in the year 1946, under the title of "Old George's Almanac":

"International Relations. . . . The international situation will continue to deteriorate. . . . The governing facts will be that no one intends to surrender sovereignty and no one is yet ready for another war, and the general tendency will always be towards 'zones of influence' and away from co-operation. . . . There will be more and more tendency for the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. to do a deal at the expense of Britain, the general terms of the bargain being American non-interference in Europe and the Middle East in return for Russian non-interference in China and Japan. . . . The Dardanelles will pass under Russian control.

"Britain. No improvement in the conditions of daily life. . . . Towards the end of the year the Opposition will begin to gain ground in by-elections, but there will be no come-back by the Conservatives. Instead there will appear a small but fairly active fascist movement, manned largely by ex-officers, and there will be symptoms of a serious split in the Labour Party.

"Germany. Stagnation enlivened by banditry. At some time in the year the Allies will decide that Germany is a liability and begin a drive to restore the industrial plant which they have previously dismantled. The Czechs will also readmit some of the Germans whom they have expelled. A powerful Resistance movement will grow up, led at first by ex-Nazis but drawing into it former anti-Nazis . . . By the end of the year the majority of Germans will look back on the Nazi régime with regret. There will be renewed rumours that Hitler is alive. . . .

"To those who just can't face the future without a cheer-up message to aid them, I present this consideration: that even if everything I have predicted comes to pass -- yes, and a lot of other horrors that I didn't get round to mentioning -- 1946 will still be appreciably better than the last six years."

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The Japanese, with their polite questions offer the most devastating comment on the Roosevelt-Stalin deal at Yalta which gave Port Arthur and the Kuriles to Russia. A New York Times dispatch from Tokyo (February 1) says: "One question most frequently asked by the Japanese -- at present fumbling with the establishment of a democratic system here -- is how, under American democracy, the Yalta agreement was possible. One Japanese who lived for some time in the United States told this correspondent: 'We are used to important decisions being made without consulting the people but we did not understand that this could be done under the United States system'." And a Japanese book publisher writes to a friend of this column: "I find it surprising how the terms democracy and liberalism are being understood in this country, as so many abuses and crimes have been committed in the name of liberty, so many unreasonable acts being dared in the name of democracy. I am anxious to publish a series of good authentic books on democracy and liberalism either for translation or for references. Will you be good enough to select a few on the subject and oblige me by sending them airmail."

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Premier Tildy of Hungary may have drawn a lesson from recent American history: In an interview he said that the new constitution of his country would follow the French rather than the American model, because Hungary did not wish to place too much power in the hands of one man. Having rejected Soviet "democracy" at the polls, Hungary's leaders now have decided not to copy American democracy because they consider it insufficiently responsive to the popular will.

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Certain German Foreign Office memoranda, annotated by Ribbentrop, were found among archives captured by our Army in Germany and now lie in a Washington file, marked "secret" and likely to remain so as long as our present policy of appeasement of Russia continues. The documents reveal the true story of the Ribbentrop-Molotov negotiations in 1940. They show that, in the summer of 1940, Russia and Germany made an agreement, in principle, to divide important areas traditionally regarded as the preserves of the British Empire. Germany recognized Iran and India as Russia's sphere of influence; Russia recognized the Mediterranean and Africa as Germany's sphere; and the Near East and the Balkans were left for further discussion, which finally took place during Molotov's visit to Berlin in November, 1940.

At that historic meeting, Molotov startled Ribbentrop and Hitler by the following demands, on which he would not compromise: (1) An undefined Russian interest in Yugoslavia; (2) A pre-eminent and exclusive Russian position in both Romania and Bulgaria; (3) Russian air bases at the Dardanelles.

These demands angered Hitler, since he regarded all this area as within his sphere. The meeting ended in a deadlock. Ribbentrop's annotations indicate that the Russian pretensions led to Hitler's decision to attack Russia.

The documents throw light on Russian policy today. They make it abundantly clear that present Russian policy is but a continuation of that pursued six years ago; that Britain, in view of Russia's agreement to take Iran and India under its wing, has more ground for suspicion of Russia than vice versa; that Russia was obviously out to divide the three old continents on a purely imperialistic basis, at a time when American Communists were calling Britain's war against Germany an "imperialistic struggle"; finally, that the German attack on Russia did not inspire present Russian policy of expansion, so often excused as a natural desire to provide protective territory against another attack.

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The dissenting opinion of Mr. Justice Rutledge, in the Yamashita case, has a direct and very significant bearing on the Nuremberg trials. "It is not in our tradition", said Justice Rutledge, "for anyone to be charged with crime which is defined after his conduct, alleged to be criminal, has taken place".

As many lawyers have been prompt to note, this attack on the practice of ex post facto law is inferentially an attack on the very basis of the legal case laboriously built up against Hitler's henchmen at Nuremberg. Indeed, the implied criticism of the Nuremberg proceedings is the stronger because these are supposed to be civil in character while the Yamashita case was tried before a military tribunal.

Since the American prosecutor at Nuremberg is Supreme Court Justice Robert H. Jackson, it is now confirmed that the highest judicial tribunal is split wide open on the question of the legality, as well as of the political desirability, of the war crimes prosecutions.

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Notes and Quotes

The Journal de Genève (Switzerland) in its comments on the Paris Peace Conference takes a pessimistic view: "As a rule, peace conferences do not settle any of the great problems pending between nations, which unfortunately are always felt after a war. Those conferences merely sanction a new state of things. Even if they wished to do so, the Paris negotiators could not change the status quo resulting from the nations' conflict. The picture of the Europe of the future has already been traced in its broad lines on the map. . . . The stakes are played, the positions have already been taken. Russia occupies the East, the Anglo-Americans the West, and no real conference will change anything whatsoever. At the moment all that can be done is to put in the lines of demarcation in India ink where they had merely been put in pencil. . . . The Great Powers have already taken control of the future of Europe in accordance with their respective interests and the balance of power. This division will persist whatever decisions are taken in Paris."

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Students of conditions in Europe are indebted to the Department of State for the publication in its April 14 Bulletin of a very enlightening map of occupied Germany. It may serve to correct a current misapprehension in the press that Germany, east of the Oder and Neisse, is already Polish and Soviet territory. The map correctly marks these areas as under Polish and Soviet administration.

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The following words of Pope Pius XII, spoken to a delegation of French journalists, have timeliness in view of the triumph of constitutional values in last Sunday's referendum in France: "When we read in the press articles and addresses by authoritative persons, we often find this conviction: What would the world be without France? It seems strange at first, but it is moving. The most critical situations and severe trials have been unable to silence the voice of many peoples.

"Other nations may prevail over France by military strength, by money, power and machinery, and by superior organization, but the true strength of France lies in her spiritual values. As long as these values remain in vigor, no reverse will overthrow her completely but she will come out of every crisis purified and strengthened and more capable of fulfilling her mission. But if one day — may God defend us against that eventuality — she were not faithful . . . the world, which counted and counts on a France strong and full of life, would contemplate her ruin with terror."

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J. Middleton Murry, in the following remarks on feeding Germany, addresses an English audience, but the lessons which he draws might apply to Americans as well: "What will happen to us if between five and ten millions of Germans for whom we have taken responsibility actually die of starvation? I do not know; but I think that, unless we are prepared to suffer with them, we shall find that the foundations of our own life will be destroyed. We shall be engulfed — not perhaps by actual starvation and pestilence — but by a deeper and more incurable evil. We shall lose the will to live. It is not superabundant among us, even today: we are living, so to speak, on what remains of our moral capital. I do not think our confidence in ourselves — already based on illusion — would survive so shattering a blow to our unconscious self-esteem as would be dealt it by large-scale starvation among people for whose lives we are directly responsible. At no matter what risk to our own food supplies, we should regard the prevention of starvation in the British zone as an absolute priority."

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The highly important defeat of the proposed French Constitution in the referendum last Sunday has imposed a definite check on the plans of the Communists. The Constitution was artfully designed to forward Communist progress towards eventual seizure of the Government. The mandate of the people on last Sunday also inflicts no little injury to Communist prestige in the coming election campaign for a new Constituent Assembly. Those who oppose the Communists have taken great hope from the outcome of the referendum and make predictions, possibly wishful-thinking and premature, of great gains by parties of the Left Center and the Right at the expense of Communists and Socialists. Some sources claim that the new Rightist bloc -- Parti Républicain de la Liberte -- was a potent factor in the defeat of the Constitution; others that it was due to the energetic opposition of former Premier Herriot and a revived Radical Socialist Party. Cynical observers noted the slogan on many walls, "Êtes-vous content? Non? Alors, votez 'Non'," and suggested that a majority of the electorate was in a negative mood.

On the international plane, the effects of the referendum on France's foreign policy will be watched closely. It is felt that the Soviet Union may now regret that it backed France's admission to the Big Four Peace Conference. At the time, it looked like smart politics, for M. Bonnet in the UN Council and M. Bidault in Paris were constrained to play along with Moscow, because of Communist strength at home. It is expected that during the coming month these gentlemen will at least prove much less obliging to Soviet wishes and may conceivably join the Anglo-American line-up.

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Talk of pronunciamientos comes from South America. It is known that certain military elements in such widely separated countries as Venezuela and Bolivia have sounded out American official circles about possibility of recognition, should they attempt revolution. But there seems more likelihood of a revolution in Chile, which, if it comes, may be more than the traditional conflict of "ins" and "outs". Chile may prove to be the first example in this hemisphere of the classic strategy of Hitler and Stalin: the promotion by one power of a revolution in a neighboring country for the purposes of nationalist expansion.

Colonel Perón has reportedly been encouraging his friends in the Chilean Army to take over control of the Government. Economic troubles have aroused popular discontents culminating in the abortive general strike in March, which was broken by the Army. The Leftist Bloc -- made up principally of Radicals, Socialists and Communists -- which has ruled Chile in the past two years is breaking up. The horizon is dark.

During the past week, President-elect Perón proposed a customs union with Chile. Since Bolivia and Paraguay have recently moved into the Argentine sphere of influence, the addition of Chile would enormously strengthen the nascent Argentine bloc. For Chile ranks close to Argentina and Brazil in wealth of natural resources and is the third largest military power on the southern continent. Meanwhile, following Perón's attempt to put pressure on Uruguay (see NMG, April 24) come reports that he has been conferring with Right-wing opposition elements in that republic. To counter Perón's threat, the United States now promises to ship Uruguay the wheat which that country badly needs and which Perón has recently refused to send because of European famine needs.

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The recent Japanese elections have revealed an interesting discrepancy between sums spent and members elected by different parties. Thus the Liberal Party, the principal election victor, spent 741,724 yen and elected 141 members to the Diet, whereas the Communist Party spent 665,114 yen, the second largest sum, but elected only 5 members. On the other hand, the Socialists, spending only one-tenth as much as the Communists, sent 92 members to the Diet.

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